

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

- 1 1. An H.323 client terminal, comprising:
 - 2 a first H.323 controller configured to handle call and control signaling during a
 - 3 media communication with another H.323 client terminal via a first gatekeeper;
 - 4 a second H.323 controller (110b) configured to handle call and control
 - 5 signaling directly with another client terminal;
 - 6 wherein said second H.323 controller (110b) provides redundant H.323
 - 7 call and control signaling for said media connection while said first H.323
 - 8 controller provides call and control signaling for said media connection via said
 - 9 first gatekeeper, and said second H.323 controller provides call and control
 - 10 signaling for said media connection directly with another client terminal if said
 - 11 first gatekeeper fails.
- 1 2. An H.323 client terminal, in accordance with claim 1, wherein said first
 - 2 H.323 controller and said second H.323 controller are configured to provide a
 - 3 same globally unique call identifier (GUID) to said first gatekeeper and said
 - 4 second client terminal.
- 1 3. An H.323 client terminal, in accordance with claim 1, wherein said first
 - 2 H.323 controller and said second H.323 controller are configured to provide a
 - 3 globally unique call identifier (GUID) to said second client terminal that is different
 - 4 but can be associated in a known way with a globally unique call identifier
 - 5 presented to said first gatekeeper.
- 1 4. A communication client terminal for use in a network having separate
 - 2 signaling and media channels, comprising:
 - 3 a first controller configured to handle call signaling during a media
 - 4 communication with another client terminal via a first gatekeeper;
 - 5 a second controller configured to handle call signaling directly with another
 - 6 client terminal;

7 wherein said second controller provides redundant signaling for said
8 media connection while said first controller provides call signaling for said media
9 connection via said first gatekeeper, and said second controller provides said call
10 signaling for said media connection directly if said first gatekeeper fails.

1 5. A communications client terminal, in accordance with claim 4, wherein
2 said first controller and said second controller are configured to provide a same
3 unique call identifier to said first gatekeeper and said second client terminal.

1 6. A communications client terminal, in accordance with claim 4, wherein
2 said first controller and said second controller are configured to provide a unique
3 call identifier to said second client terminal that is different from, but can be
4 associated in a known way, with a unique call identifier presented to said first
5 gatekeeper.

1 7. A communications client terminal, in accordance with claim 4, wherein
2 said communications client terminal comprises an H.323 client terminal.

1 8. A communications client terminal, in accordance with claim 4, wherein
2 said communications client terminal operates in a network having separate
3 media and signaling channels.

1 9. A telecommunications system, having separate media and signaling
2 channels, comprising:
3 a packet-switched network;
4 a plurality of client terminals coupled to said packet switched network;
5 a plurality of gatekeepers coupled to said packet switched network;
6 wherein the plurality of client terminals are configured to establish primary
7 signaling connections with one another via a first of said plurality of gatekeepers,
8 and redundant signaling connections with one another directly while maintaining
9 a single media connection such that if said primary gatekeeper fails, said media

10 connection is maintained with said redundant signaling connection.

1 10. A telecommunications system according to claim 9, wherein said client
2 terminals are configured to establish signaling via another of said plurality of
3 gatekeepers while control signaling is being provided directly by said redundant
4 signaling connection.

1 11. A telecommunications system according to claim 9, wherein a
2 predetermined number, less than a total number, of said plurality of client
3 terminals are equipped to establish said gatekeeper routed primary and direct,
4 non-gatekeeper routed redundant signaling connections.

1 12. A telecommunications system according to claim 11, wherein at least one
2 of said predetermined number of said plurality of client terminals are configured
3 to search for a back-up gatekeeper if said first gatekeeper fails while a signaling
4 channel is maintained by said redundant signaling connection.

1 13. A telecommunications system, according to claim 9, wherein said packet-
2 switched network comprises an H.323 network and said client terminals comprise
3 H.323 clients and said gatekeepers comprise H.323 gatekeepers.

1 14. A telecommunications system, according to claim 9, wherein said packet-
2 switched network comprises a network having separate media and signaling
3 channels.